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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/581,087	05/31/2006	Kazuhiro Kusuda	5132-0103PUS1	2056
2292	7590	10/13/2010	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747				LIM, SENG HENG
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3717				
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			10/13/2010	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

mailroom@bskb.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/581,087	KUSUDA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	SENG H. LIM	3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 July 2010.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 23-30 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 31 May 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This office action is in response to the amendment filed on 7/30/2010 in which applicant amends claims 23-24 & 30; and responds to the claim rejections. Claims 1-30 are pending. Claims 1-22 are withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 23-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Drawings

New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because they are photograph copies and are not clear. Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsperson outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Re claim 23-24, 30. The examiner is not sure what applicant means by the term "a predetermined remaining number of times available". To further prosecute the case, the examiner is interpreting it to mean a predetermined remaining number of times available for use of said characters in formation of a party.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tajiri et al (US 6,482,092 B1) in view of Gress (US 2005/0151320 A1) and Yamato et al (US 2004/0162136 A1).

Re claim 24. Tajiri discloses a game machine which performs a multiplayer competition game in which a plurality of players compete [with] each other for capturing characters (Fig. 5-7), comprising:

a communication interface (30 & 31: Fig. 2) for transmitting and receiving data to and from another game machine (col. 2, lines 24-25, Fig 5-7),

an operation unit (23: Fig. 2) with which a player performs input operation of signals; and

a display unit (27: Fig. 2) for displaying the situation of the game;

a storage unit (10B) for storing data representing a plurality of types of characters, each provided with a different property (col. 13, lines 51-54, Fig. 3);

an extraction unit (23: Fig. 2) for extracting, triggered by the player's selecting operation, data representing a predetermined number of characters (col. 13, lines 46-54);

a party formation unit (23: Fig. 2) for generating data representing a party consisting of each of said characters, by combining the data representing said extracted characters (i.e. battle data, col. 13, lines 46-54); and

a game performing unit (23: Fig. 2) for performing a multiplayer competition game in which an offensive of one party causes a total physical strength value of the other party to become a value equal or lower than a predetermined value and thereby determines a winner and a loser (L38 & L42: Fig. 20), using said data representing said formed party, and data representing the party input from said another game machine (i.e. battle between main player and rival trainer, col. 13, lines 41-45).

Tajiri also discloses the concept of capturing a defeated pokemon during a battle and adds it to his collection (col. 10, lines 1-9). Tajiri does not expressly disclose defeating another game machine in the competition and capturing the another game machine's character; however, the concept of capturing the defeated opponent's character of another game machine is known as evidenced by Gress [0078]. At the time of invention a person of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to modify Tajiri in view of Gress to capture opponent's defeated character and would have been motivated to do so to increase the excitement of the game by increasing the incentive of winning a battle.

Tajiri does not expressly disclose storing a remaining numbers of times available for use of said characters in formation of a party; however, the concept of character lending, wherein a storage medium storing a remaining number of times available for use of a character in formation of a party, is well known in the art as evidenced by Yamato (Abstract). At the time of invention a person of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to modify Tajiri in view of Yamato and would have been motivated

to do so increase interaction of players and the ability to exchange characters among the players.

Re claim 23. Tajiri, Gress and Yamato disclose a game machine comprising a plurality of client devices and communication interface for transmitting and receiving data to and from another game machine as discussed in claim 24 above. Yamato also discloses that it's known to conduct multiplayer game over a server device [0007, 0069]

Re claim 25. Tajiri discloses the remaining number of times available of the character configuring said party is decreased by a certain number if it is defeated in said competition, whereas the character and its remaining number of times available added to the side which won said competition is approximately equal to said decreased number of times available of the character (col. 13, lines 41-64).

Re claim 26. Gress disclose the data representing any one of the characters configuring said party is deleted upon losing said competition, whereas the character and its remaining number of times available added to the side which won said competition are approximately equal to said deleted character (i.e. after capturing the opponent's character, the opponent's character is implicitly deleted from the opponent's data).

Re claim 27. Gress disclose the party formation unit newly generates, when performing the next game, data representing said party, using the data representing said character and its remaining number of times available (i.e. the captured character can be used by the winning player in following games).

Re claim 28. Gress disclose the extraction unit disables, at the next and subsequent games, extraction of at least one of the data representing the character and its remaining number of times available, which together compose the data representing the party used when performing said game (i.e. the opponent that losses it's character can no longer extract that character's data).

Re claim 29. Tajiri discloses the storage unit stores a plurality of types of tables including data representing a plurality of types of characters, each of which is provided with a different property, and data of a plurality of types of symbols which are determined in association with the data representing each of said characters and can be displayed on said display areas (Fig.3),

 said party formation unit associates, for each of display areas, said data representing said characters (Fig. 20),

 said display unit reads said table corresponding to the data representing said characters, and performs, on said display areas associated with the data representing said characters, a varying state presentation in which a plurality of symbols having been in their halted state on a plurality of display areas are constantly varied into a variety of symbols and displayed, and a halted state presentation in which said symbols being presented in the varying state are halted again and displayed on each of said display areas (Fig. 3 & 20).

Re claim 30. Tajiri, Gress and Yamato disclose a game program (col. 6, lines 11-29) for performing a multiplayer competition game as discussed in claim 24 above.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SENG H. LIM whose telephone number is (571)270-3301. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00, Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on 571-272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Seng H Lim/

Examiner, Art Unit 3714

/Peter DungBa Vo/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714